

REMARKS

This Response is filed in reply to the Office Action dated September 16, 2005, which is an Election/Restriction. The Examiner asserted that the application contains two groups of inventions related as process of making and product made and that the product could be made by a different process including stamping a pattern on the buckle's surface. The groups provided by the Examiner are as follows:

Group I, claims 1-10 and 17-22; and

Group II, claims 11-16 and 23-26.

In response, Applicants provisionally elect, with traverse, Group I, claims 1-10 and 17-22. While Applicants agree that a buckle can be made by stamping a pattern on the buckle's surface, Applicants respectfully suggest that the Examiner has not fully considered the limitations in the claims. Both groups of claims contain corresponding limitations, such that the products recited in the Group I claims are made using the methods recited in the Group II claims.

For example, claim 1 recites a buckle with a display layer on its outer surface having a different color than the buckle and a sealant layer deposited over the display layer. The corresponding method claim 11 recites applying the display layer on the buckle and depositing the sealant layer over the display layer. Thus, even if the buckle itself can be fabricated by a variety of means, the methods recited in the Group II claims provide the display layer and sealant layer of the buckle recited in the Group I claims.

CONCLUSION

Applicants consider the Response herein to be fully responsive to the referenced Office Action. Based on the above Remarks, it is respectfully submitted that this application is in condition for allowance. Accordingly, allowance is requested. If there are any remaining issues or the Examiner believes that a telephone conversation with Applicants' attorney would be helpful in expediting the prosecution of this application, the Examiner is invited to call the undersigned at 617-832-1175.

Respectfully submitted,

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